

Remarks

Prior to this communication, claims 1 – 63 are pending. Claims 1 – 63 were rejected. By this amendment, claims 1 – 63 have been cancelled; and claims 64 – 83 have been added. Examination and reconsideration of the claims in view of the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Specification Objections

Page 3 of the Office action indicated that the word “predetermined” as disclosed in paragraph [0029] of the Specification means “to settle or decided in advance.” The Office action further asserted that “[i]f the total number of players, the total amount of stake risked or the player’s credits can be changed throughout the game, then they are not predetermined elements.” As such, the Examiner objected to the Specification.

Although the elements are predetermined, there is no reason why the elements cannot be changed. For example, Applicant respectfully recites paragraph [0029] as follows:

The predetermined elements of the cooperative gaming environment which are subject to change and which lead to the generation of milestones may include the total number of players either increasing or decreasing, the total amount of stake risked or when any single player's credits are depleted, i.e. reduced to zero.

Also as illustrated in FIG. 2 of the Specification, elements of the “standard and predetermined environments ... are supplied by the system.” Specifically, paragraph [0090] of the Specification discloses with respect to a “predetermined environment”:

Players indicate their desire to participate in a cooperative gaming environment. When a cooperative gaming environment becomes available, the exact nature of the environment and preset governing rules are communicated to the players. Players have the option as to whether or not to participate. The system determines if the number of players electing to participate justifies a cooperative game.

That is, during a gaming environment configuration, the elements are predetermined, i.e. initialized or defaulted, to one or more values that are subject to change, for example, when a

player decides to join or exit the cooperative gaming group (as in the total number of player either increasing or decreasing). As such, although one or more elements are initialized or “predetermined,” the elements can still be subject to change.

Applicant respectfully requests withdrawals of the objections.

35 U.S.C. §112 Rejections

Claims 1 – 45 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 1 – 45 have been cancelled. The rejection is thus deemed moot.

New claims 64 – 83 do not use the specific language objected by the Examiner. It is respectfully submitted that claims 43 – 83 meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

Applicant respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections.

35 U.S.C. §102 Rejections

Claims 1 – 5, 8 – 10, 14 – 21, 25 – 27, 37 – 41, 44 – 53, 57, and 58 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (e) as being anticipated by U.S. Publication No. 2003/0064807 (“Walker”).

Claims 1 – 63 have been cancelled. Rejections are thus deemed moot.

New claims 64 – 83 are not anticipated by Walker as discussed below.

Applicant respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections.

35 U.S.C. §103 Rejections

Claims 6, 7, 11 – 13, 22 – 24, 28 – 36, 42, 43, 54 – 56, and 59 – 63 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Walker.

Claims 1 – 63 have been cancelled. Rejections are thus deemed moot.

New claims 64 – 83 are not made obvious by Walker as discussed below.

Applicant respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections.

Newly Added Claims

Claims 64 – 83 have been added.

Independent claim 64 is directed to a method for use with a gaming system. The method includes, among other things, “allowing a person to enroll in a cooperative gaming group,” “establishing at least one rule for a cooperative game that can be played by the cooperative gaming group,” “presenting the at least one rule to the person,” and “allowing the person to un-enroll from the cooperative gaming group subsequent to presenting the at least one rule to the person.”

Independent claim 74 is directed to a “gaming system” that includes, among other things, “a game controller” that is configured to “interact with at least one input interface of a gaming machine in order to allow a person to enroll in a cooperative gaming group,” “establish at least one rule for a cooperative game that can be played by the cooperative gaming group,” “interact with at least one visual display device of the gaming machine in order to present the at least one rule for the cooperative game,” and “interact with the at least one input interface of the gaming machine in order to allow the person to un-enroll from the cooperative gaming group subsequent to presenting the at least one rule to the person.”

Applicant respectfully submits the Specification supports claims 64 and 74. For example, the Specification discloses that

[a]nother way in which players can be **invited to join the** cooperative gaming environment is to register their interest with a software implemented registration module of the central control unit 16 so that, when a cooperative gaming environment presents itself, the players are invited to participate.

(Paragraph [0065], emphasis added.) That is, a person, or player, is invited to join, i.e. enroll, in the cooperative gaming environment or group. Similarly, the Specification also discloses that

when the player is in between games then the cooperative gaming environment is idle for that player and that **player may then choose to exit** [the cooperative gaming environment].

(Paragraph [0031], emphasis added.) Furthermore, the Specification discloses that

the system 10 ensures that the credits withdrawn are within the limits of the credit pool. P layers may either freely **withdraw from the credit pool** or agree on a set risk limit.

(paragraph [0084], emphasis added.) That is, a person, or player, is allowed to exit, i.e. un-enroll, from the cooperative gaming environment or group.

Applicant respectfully submits that Walker does not anticipate at least with respect to “allowing a person to enroll in a cooperative gaming group,” and “allowing the person to un-enroll from the cooperative gaming group subsequent to presenting the at least one rule to the person,” as recited in claim 64, and “interact with at least one input interface of a gaming machine in order to allow a person to enroll in a cooperative gaming group,” “interact with the at least one input interface of the gaming machine in order to allow the person to un-enroll from the cooperative gaming group subsequent to presenting the at least one rule to the person,” as recited in claim 74.

Rather, Walker only allows a player to accept or decline to join a linked playing game. Walker does not anticipate “allowing the person to un-enroll from the cooperative gaming group subsequent to presenting the at least one rule to the person,” as recited in claim 64, or “interact with the at least one input interface of the gaming machine in order to allow the person to un-enroll from the cooperative gaming group subsequent to presenting the at least one rule to the person,” as recited in claim 74.

As such, claims 64 and 74 are allowable. Claims 65 – 73 and 75 – 83 are dependent from the respective allowable claims, and are therefore allowable.

No new matter has been added.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that all of claims 64 – 83 are allowable. In the event that the Examiner believes a telephone interview with the undersigned Applicant's Representative would be helpful in advancing prosecution of this patent application, the undersigned is available for telephone consultation during normal business hours.

Respectfully submitted,

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